THE ROMANTIC HARP

Grandjany
Pierné
Fauré
de Falla
Salzédo
Rota

Judy Loman

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The importance of France in late romantic harp repertoire will be evident from the repertoire included in the present recording, culminating in the *Ballade* of the great French harpist Carlos Salzédo, who went on to develop a wide range of possible techniques and sonorities. It was largely through the work of French performers and teachers that the instrument developed from an elegant salon appurtenance to an essential feature of the modern orchestra, with an independent and characteristic repertoire of its own.

Born in Paris in 1891, the harpist Marcel Grandjany had his early musical training with a relative, Juliette Georges Grandjany, winning a scholarship at the age of eight to study the harp with Henriette Renié. A year later he started classes of solfège at the Conservatoire, where, from 1902 until 1910, he was a pupil of Alphonse Hasselmans. He made his Paris début with the Concerts Lamoureux Orchestra in 1909, and after a relatively brief period of military service was from 1915 to 1918 organist and choirmaster at the Sacré-Cœur Basilica. His connection with America came with a period of fourteen years as a teacher at the American Conservatoire at Fontainebleau, and, after his London début in 1922, his first appearance in New York two years later.

He toured widely in Europe and North America and was co-founder of the Quintette Instrumental de Paris, for which composers such as Vincent d'Indy and Albert Roussel wrote works. From 1936 he made his home in America, taking out American citizenship in 1945. He taught at the Manhattan School and from 1938 at the Juilliard School as well as for some time also in Montreal. Distinguished as a performer and as a teacher, he also wrote a quantity of music for the harp, all of it well suited to the instrument, including original compositions and transcriptions. His *Fantaisie on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 31*, an introduction, theme and five variations, was published in 1953.

Marcel Tournier was also a pupil of Hasselmans at the Paris Conservatoire. One of the five sons of a Paris luthier, like his brothers he followed his father's demand that all should learn a string instrument, entering the Conservatoire at the age of sixteen. He studied harmony, counterpoint and composition with Lenepvu, Caussade and Widor respectively, and won the second Prix de Rome in 1909. He succeeded Hasselmans at the Conservatoire in 1912, continuing there until 1948, when he was succeeded by Lily Laskine. He had a strong influence as a teacher, while his compositions for the harp make a significant addition to the repertoire of the instrument. His impressionistic *Vers la source dans le bois* (Towards the fountain in the wood) was written in 1922.

Precocious as a composer, with an oratorio first performed when he was twelve, Nino Rota studied at the Milan Conservatory, thereafter taking private lessons first with Ildebrando Pizzetti and then with Alfredo Casella. His career brought a long association with Bari Conservatory, of which he was appointed director in 1950. A versatile composer, he wrote some eighty film scores, including collaborations with Fellini, Zeffirelli and Visconti, and the score for Coppola's *The Godfather*. His *Sarabanda e toccata* for harp, its neo-classical form suggested in its title, was written in 1945, three years before his concerto for the instrument. The *Sarabande* moves from a chordal opening to a feer section, while the *Toccata* suggests the musical language of Poulenc.

A pupil of Jules Massenet and of César Franck at the Paris Conservatoire, Gabriel Pierné succeeded the latter as organist at Ste Clotilde, later distinguishing himself as a conductor, notably as deputy and then successor to Edouard Colonne at the Concerts Colonne. His *Impromptu-caprice*, a well-known showpiece for the harp, dates from 1887. It starts with a cadenza, before the introduction of a melody of particular charm, which is to return in conclusion, after a livelier Bolero at the heart of the work.

The first *Spanish Dance* from Manuel de Falla's opera *La vida breve* has lent itself to a variety of arrangements, whether for violin or guitar. It is perhaps

even more effective in a harp transcription that adds a wider range of sonorities. The opera itself, finally recast in two acts, was first staged in Nice in 1913, when there seemed no immediate prospect of performance in Spain, where it had, in 1905, been awarded first prize in a competition for Spanish opera. The dance is heard in the second act at the wedding of Paco and Carmela, after the former's betrayal of the young gypsy girl Salud, who, in the final scene, is to die at his feet.

The French composer Gabriel Fauré studied at the Ecole Niedermeyer in Paris, where, by good fortune, he met Saint-Saëns, who was then teaching the piano at the school, and was later his deputy organist at the Madeleine. He eventually secured a position at the Paris Conservatoire, of which he became director in 1905. Fauré's musical language bridged a gap between the romanticism of the nineteenth century and the world of music that had appeared with the new century, developing and evolving, but retaining its own fundamental characteristics. His harmonic idiom, with its subtle changes of tonality and his gift for melody, is combined with an understanding of the way contemporary innovations might be used in a manner completely his own. He made an unforgettable contribution to French song repertoire, and his *Une Châtelaine en sa tour …, Op. 110*, for harp, written in 1918 for the harpist Micheline Kahn, is derived from a setting of a poem from Verlaine's *La bonne chanson*. The song, *Une Sainte en son aureole* (A Saint in her halo) continues with a second line that gives the harp piece its title, the character of the work summarised in the following lines *Tout ce que contient la parole / Humaine de grâce et d'amour*. Fauré's *Impromptu, Op. 86*, also known in a version for piano, was originally written in 1904 for harp as a *morceau de concours* for the Conservatoire.

The Canadian composer Kelly-Marie Murphy has won a considerable reputation and a number of important awards in her own country and in the United States. Her concerto for harp and orchestra *And then at night I paint the stars …*, its title taken from a letter of Vincent Van Gogh to his brother, was commissioned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra to mark the retirement of Judy Loman as principal harpist and is dedicated to her. Its third movement, *Scintillation*, a title earlier familiar from Salzédo, is in the form of a cadenza that can be heard as a piece by itself, in its original context leading to the final movement of the work, *Morning Sky*.

A musician of unusual precocity, Sergey Prokofiev completed his composition studies at the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1909, continuing there in the piano class of Anna Esipova, pupil and former wife of Leschetizky. It was in these years, from 1906 to 1913, that he wrote a set of ten piano pieces, the seventh of which, *Prelude*, was dedicated to his fellow-student, the harpist Eleanora Damskaya. The *Harp Prelude* easily lends itself to transcription for the harp itself, with romantic cascades of notes in music that lacks anything of Prokofiev's frequent astringency.

A graduate in piano and harp from the Paris Conservatoire, Carlos Salzédo moved to New York in 1909, serving initially as principal harpist in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under Toscanini. He was active in the promotion of new music, established the harp department at the Curtis Institute and taught at the Juilliard School. As a composer and performer he exercised a strong influence on harp performance, exploring the possibilities of the instrument and its varied timbres. His *Ballade*, a standard virtuoso element in modern harp repertoire, is one of a set of three pieces published in 1913, and, as a relatively early work, reflects a harmonic vocabulary familiar from the works of his French contemporaries. It was dedicated to Hasselmans, his teacher.

Keith Anderson

Judy Loman

Judy Loman was a pupil of Carlo Salzédo at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and was principal harpist from 1960 until 2002 with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, with which she has appeared as a soloist in Canada, the United States of America and Europe. She has also appeared as a soloist with major orchestras internationally, as well as in recitals and master-classes. She has recorded frequently and successfully and has received the Canadian Juno Award for best classical recording and the Canada Council's Grand Prix du Disque. In addition to her international career as a performer, Judy Loman is harp instructor at the Curtis Institute of Music, Professor of Harp at the University of Toronto and on the faculty of the Royal Conservatory in Toronto. She has served on the juries of important international competitions, notably in the United States and in Israel.

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THE ROMANTIC HARP

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This recital of mainly late Romantic harp repertoire not only illustrates the important contribution of French composers to the genre but some of the innovative techniques introduced by composers of the early twentieth century. Concluding with the virtuosic *Ballade* composed by the great Franco-American harpist Carlos Salzédo, the disc includes a movement from the *Harp Concerto 'And then at night I paint the stars'* by the contemporary Canadian composer, Kelly-Marie Murphy, written for Judy Loman.

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1	Marcel GRANDJANY (1891–1975): Fantasy on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 31	7:57
2	Marcel TOURNIER (1879–1951): Vers la source dans le bois	4:18
3	Nino ROTA (1911–1979): Sarabanda and Toccata	7:26
4	Gabriel PIERNÉ (1863–1937): Impromptu-Caprice, Op. 9	5:59
5	Manuel de FALLA (1876–1946): Spanish Dance No. 1 from 'La Vida Breve'	4:15
	Gabriel FAURÉ (1845–1924):	
6	Une Châtelaine en sa Tour, Op. 110	4:41
7	Impromptu, Op. 86	8:31
8	Kelly-Marie MURPHY (b. 1964): Harp Concerto 'And then at night I paint the stars' – III: Scintillation (Cadenza)	3:55
9	Sergei PROKOFIEV (1891–1953): Prelude in C, Op. 12, No. 7	2:38
10	Carlos SALZÉDO (1885–1961): Ballade, Op. 28	9:46

Judy Loman

Recorded in St John Chrysostom Church, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada from 13th to 16th July 2003 and the 21st to 23rd August 2003 • Producers: Norbert and Bonnie Kraft • Engineer: Norbert Kraft
Editor: Norbert Kraft • Booklet Notes: Keith Anderson
Cover Picture: *La Ghirlandata by Charles Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–82)*
(Guildhall Art Gallery, Corporation of London / Bridgeman Art Library)

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Playing Time
59:25

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